

SYLLABUS REQUIREMENTS

POLICY STATEMENT

To ensure that 1) program faculty collectively agree upon and maintain consistent course purpose statements and learning outcomes; 2) students receive consistent communication in this regard; and 3) faculty and Academic Units are able to access syllabi for all classes, Northern Arizona University requires the development and use of syllabi in accordance with this policy. Each course must have an approved syllabus on record that adheres to the University's Syllabus Template. Each class section must have a syllabus that aligns with the course syllabus of record. Academic units shall maintain all approved and current syllabi and related materials, such as individualized term-specific requirements, for all classes taught in a central unit electronic repository to which all unit faculty or instructors have ongoing ready access. At least once every four years, each Academic Unit shall review and update, as needed, syllabi for all courses being offered. Each syllabus will be reviewed and approved during the course's curriculum approval, academic program review, or discipline-specific accreditation.

REASON FOR THIS POLICY

Consistently applied syllabus requirements help ensure that regardless of the instructor, location, modality, or timing, each class section addresses the same course purpose and learning outcomes as designated by the program's faculty and ensures accessibility of course and class syllabi. Further, this policy supports the achievement of the Degree Program Expectation for Strategic Course Design, thus fulfilling High Learning Commission accreditation requirements regarding educational quality as well as syllabi accessibility.

ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

- Office of the Provost
- All Academic Units

WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY

- Academic Unit leaders
- All faculty and graduate teaching assistants
- Deans
- Vice Provost for Teaching, Learning Design, and Assessment

DEFINITIONS

Academic Unit: a college, school, department, program or other division of the University that offers course work and minors, certificates, or degrees in a field of study.

Course Purpose Statement: a narrative declaration that identifies the overall goals or aims of a course, as collectively understood by the faculty members teaching in the degree program, that summarizes and differentiates the course from other courses offered at the University in terms of the content studied, skills developed, learning experiences provided and the role the course plays in the academic program(s) it serves.

Student Learning Outcomes: the scope (breadth and depth) of what students will know or be able to do upon successful completion of a course. Course learning outcomes are explicit, are learning-centered (focus on what students learn rather than on what faculty teach), align with the Course Purpose Statement, and are appropriate to the level of the degree offered (e.g., Master's degree outcomes would be more rigorous and comprehensive than Bachelor's degree outcomes, etc.).

POLICY

A. Requirements

Each course taught at Northern Arizona University must have an approved syllabus that complies with the requirements of this policy. The course's approved Course Purpose Statement, Student Learning Outcomes, and Academic Catalog information must remain consistent regardless of class section, instructor, instructional delivery mode, or when the course is taught. Program faculty may determine that additional aspects of the syllabus shall remain consistent each time the course is offered. Each syllabus will be reviewed and approved during the course's curriculum approval, academic program review, or discipline-specific accreditation.

B. Syllabus Template

Each syllabus must be modelled upon and comply with the University's [Syllabus Template](#) that prescribes the minimum syllabus content required. Faculty are encouraged to include in their syllabi additional information or elements, and order the syllabus sections in a manner appropriate or helpful for a given course. Specifically, faculty may add to their Course Purpose Statements and Student Learning Outcomes, but they may not subtract from the language developed and approved by the faculty in the department.

C. Syllabus Policy Statements

The University's approved [Syllabus Policy Statements](#) provide information about important University and Academic Policies that all students should know. Accordingly, all syllabi for 100 and 200 level courses must include these statements in their entirety. Syllabi for all other courses may provide access to the approved *Syllabus Policy Statements* by including the relevant URL hotlink.

D. Exceptions

1. For dissertation, thesis, or individualized study courses (e.g., 485, 497, 685, 697, 699, 799), program faculty members develop the purpose and learning outcomes of the experience to the degree program, which are made broadly available to students. Faculty supervising these courses will provide each student with a written record of anticipated individualized term-specific requirements or a syllabus.
2. For topics courses, program faculty members develop a broad purpose of the course to the degree program. Faculty teaching these courses will provide each student with a syllabus containing all of the information from the Syllabus Template. The learning outcomes for topics courses may vary each time the course is taught.

E. Accessibility of Syllabi of Record

Academic unit leaders or designee(s) will ensure course syllabi approved through the curriculum process are easily accessible to their faculty members, particularly faculty members who are teaching a course for the first time, or who have not taught the course recently.

F. Maintenance and Periodic Review

Academic units shall maintain all approved and current syllabi and related materials, such as individualized term-specific requirements, for all classes taught in a central unit electronic repository to which all unit faculty or instructors shall have ongoing ready access. Academic units shall review topics course syllabi each term to ensure alignment of course design with course purpose and learning outcomes. During academic program review or discipline-specific accreditation processes, but at least once every four years at minimum, each Academic Unit will review all syllabi to ensure continuing alignment with each course's approved syllabus or

determine whether the course's purpose or learning outcomes have changed substantially to warrant re-submission through the curriculum approval process.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Academic Unit Leaders: ensure syllabi for new faculty or faculty who have not taught a course for a period of time receive the syllabus of record in a timely manner in order to design their class sections; obtain class section syllabi from faculty each term; lead or direct periodic review of syllabi.

Deans: ensure Academic Unit syllabi are in a readily-accessible, unit-centralized, electronic archive.

Faculty: ensure that all Syllabus Template elements are included in their syllabus; send their completed syllabi to the Academic Unit leader or designee each term for the courses they teach; ensure the verbiage for the Course Purpose and Learning Outcomes are the same as the syllabus of record (they may add to this verbiage, but not subtract from it), and that they design and teach their class so that students have opportunities to achieve the learning outcomes.

Vice Provost for Teaching, Learning Design, and Assessment: ensures clear communication of syllabus policy requirements, that curriculum reviews align with the policy, and that all syllabi are reviewed as part of academic program review or discipline-specific accreditation processes.

PROCEDURES

There are no procedures associated with this policy.

RELATED INFORMATION

Forms or Tools

[Course Design Support Website](#)

[Syllabus Guidelines, Examples and Review Forms Website](#)

[Syllabus Policy Statements](#)

[Syllabus Template](#)

Cross-References

There are no cross-references associated with this policy.

Sources

There are no external sources associated with this policy.

APPENDIX*

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

*Disclaimer: all documents, links, or other materials included in this policy's appendix are provided solely for the user's convenience and are not part of official University policy.